CONDOLENCE:

AN

ELEGIAC EPISTLE

FROM

Lieut. Gen. B - R G - Y N E,

Captured at Saratoga, Oct. 17, 1777,

TO

Lieut. Gen. Earl C - R N W - L L - S,

Captured at York-Town, Oct. 17, 1781.

WITH

NOTES BY THE EDITOR.

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AN

ELEGIAC EPISTLE.

I.

TELL me, my Lord! can no ſoft ſtrain
Aſſuage a captive Gen'ral's pain,
Or ſooth the brow of care?
May not a Muſe, impell'd like mine,
In ſympathetic ſorrows join,
In woes congenial ſhare!

II.

Mine too it was in laurell'd pride,
To march with Fame at Glory's ſide,
O'er *trans-atlantic* meads;

But

But vain, alas! is mortal bliſs,
Fame proves a common jilting miſs;
Laurels are pois'nous weeds!

III

"What, though our troops were *Freedom*'s foes,
There are, my Lord! who ſhare *their* woes,
And all *their* virtues ſee;
Through each dark ſcene this grateful ſoil
Felt for her gallant ſoldiers' toil,
Yet laugh'd at you and me.

IV.

But ſince Misfortune guards us round,
Fair Candour ſtills each adverſe ſound;
* Mac-Ray no tongue has falter'd:

No

* It would be ungenerous to conceive this horrid tranſaction met the approbation of Gen---l B-rg--ne; on the contrary, his unimpeached bravery as a ſoldier muſt have revolted at the idea: however, if a man turns ſavages looſe upon ſociety, there is more than poetic juſtice in making him anſwerable for the conſequences.

No voice proclaims how fortunes ſmile,
Inflated my bombaſtic ſtyle,
* Or your opinions alter'd.

V.

That you, in earlieſt youth, began
To vindicate the rights of man
The Muſe ſhall pleas'd relate:
While public principles betray'd,
Oblivion's friendly veil ſhall ſhade
From ignominious hate.

VI.

If, then, from public odium clear,
No keen reproach attain the ear,
And Fates no ill diſpenſe,
At leaſt, my Lord, we claim no reaſon
To think a laugh much out of ſeaſon,
Though rais'd at our expence.

VII. Shall

* The oppoſition of Lord C-rnw-ll-s to the Declaratory Act and his conduct at that time is freſh in the minds of Engliſhmen, and will ſerve as a foil to ſet off the brilliancy of his ſubſequent exploits.

VII.

Shall then thy friend in hiſt'ry ſeek
For *Roman* precedents or *Greek*,
Of far fam'd Gen'rals beaten;
Or if Romance more apt invites
The tale ſhall dwell on Chriſtian knights
By giants kill'd and eaten.

VIII.

Well might it ſuit the claſſic page
To paint the ſoul-devouring rage
Of many a vanquiſh'd *Roman*;
Or prove on every wild-gooſe miſſion,
(Save *Quixote's* windmill expedition,)
We yield the palm to no man.

IX.

Will elegiac lines compoſe
The torrent of oppreſſive woes;
Or, ſince abroad you roam,
Shall I relate the wond'rous ſtory,
Redounding far to Britain's glory;
How matters thrive at home:

X.

Struck when thy fate the C--nc-l ſaw,
Scarce the *good Dowager of Law*
Would at the Board preſide;
And mighty M-nsf--ld, all aghaſt,
Swears, if the *Rubicon* he paſs'd,
'Twas ſwimming with the tide.

XI.

No more great N-rth, in language meet,
Paints *Congreſs* proſtrate at his feet,
In long foretold ſubmiſſion;
Bold was the thought, the fancy rare,
'Twas but the plague to get them there
That puzzled politicians.

XII.

Lo! that auſpicious pow'r, G-rm--ne,
Clad in the ſpoils of M-nd-n's plain,
A treatiſe grave is writing,
To prove what fatal ills are brought
On deſp'rate ſoldiers, who have caught
The curſed trick of fighting.

XIII.

If ſocial R-gby loves his jeſt,
Proverbs themſelves explain the reſt,
For thoſe may laugh who win;
And if high mirth but ſuit high places,*
Some joy may beam on humbler faces;
Atk-nſ-n's ſelf may grin.

XIV.

On Th-rl-w's brow the manly thought
Seem'd with ſome lab'ring bus'neſs fraught;
The lip was doubly bit;
And gratitude alone confin'd
The efforts of that manly mind,
For ev'ry purpoſe fit.

XV.

Twitcher, improv'd by M--d-n's cares,
Plurality of comfort ſhares
Midſt his religious qualms;

But

* 'Tis from high life high characters are drawn. POPE.

But craz'd by goſpel meditations,
Miſtakes *Memoirs* * for *Revelations*,
And *catches* ſings for *pſalms*.

XVI.

Late, in a fit of pious phrenzy,
He rav'd upon the *Count Struenzee*,
And trembled for his head;
His *Bible* then with zeal explor'd,
And e'er the ſenſes were reſtor'd,
Half *La Pucelle* was read.

XVII.

While commerce ſinks, and taxes riſe,
The genial form of affluence flies
From men in ev'ry rank;
The life of public credit's ſhaken,
And M-nn-rs ſelf I'm told has taken
Poſt obiits on the Bank.

XVIII.

* Suppoſed to mean the M—— of a W—— of P——.

XVIII.

In happier climes hence On-l-w ſhuns
A *Congreſs* of *rebellious* duns,
By whiggiſh laws made bold;
And if a mould'ring fleet we view,
Who but aſpires to ſee Sir H——
The tarniſh'd flag unfold.

XIX.

My *northern light* firſt beam'd the ray,
Which thy meridian climes diſplay;
The thought inſpires my ſoul!
Thus, thanks to ours and graver heads,
The fame of Britiſh wiſdom ſpreads
Almoſt from pole to pole.

XX.

Say, muſt we then diſgrac'd remain?
G-ge and Sir G-y rewards obtain!
Cl-nt-n and H-we have ribbons!
I too have other claims more nice,
Since ev'ry author finds his price,
From W-ftl-y up to G-bb-ns!

XXI.

XXI.

Yet J-hnſ-n's voice no more is heard,
Enſhrin'd in many a long-drawn word,
T' obſtetricate the nation :
C-mb-rl-nd hides th' Iberian flow'rs,
And even T-ck-el's comic pow'rs
Sink by *Anticipation*.

XXII.

No more Mac Oſſian's erſe-forg'd pen
Blots from the hallow'd page of men
Your *Sidneys* or your *Ruſſels* ;
Yet the *Gazette*, all ſhame defying,
Claims an *authority* for lying,
And far out-bruſſels Bruſſels.

XXIII.

Each paltry pen'worth of the day,
Reviews and Journals earn their pay,——
Yet, why ſhou'd theſe be mentioned ?
Since, to reward the truth-form'd page,
And guard the morals of the age,
E'en B-te himſelf is penſion'd.

XXIV.

XXIV.

Bleſt clime! where arts and letters reign,
So much that e'en the boiſt'rous main
Wafts nought but courtly diction; *
Where, far beyond old laureats fir'd,
Each *Morning Herald* ſeems inſpir'd
With pure poetic fiction.

XXV.

Hence, too, by zeal for ſcience ſway'd,
Why G-bb-ns ſhines a lord of trade
Reaſons twofold prevail!
No buſy cares the poſt await;
And when he paints a falling ſtate,
Materials cannot fail.

XXVI.

Curſe on the fooliſh pride of *Rome*,
That welcom'd all her warriors home,
Whene'er on luck they ſtumbled;
False

* Vide Commodore J-hn---n's Letters.

Falſe was the plan, the cuſtom vain;
None but the fall'n ſhould praiſe obtain,
And conquerors be humbled.

XXVII.

Would Albion's now more poliſh'd ſtate
Reverſe the haughty victor's fate,
(Her captive Gen'ral's ranſom!)
To lead all glorious through the town,
Thoſe only who had miſs'd renown,
Is ſurely far more handſome.

XXVIII.

But if that ſhrewd arch jeſuit B--ke
Should ſet his ſaving plans to work,
Which all expence forego;
This trading nation might create
Copartnerſhips in city ſtate,
And club with Lord Mayor's ſhow.

XXIX.

Triumphal arch of *Temple-Bar!*
Methinks I view the deck'd from far! —
The Cits all pour libations;

Whilſt

Whilſt we, tranſcendent in defeat,
Should ſhare a *triumph* all complete,
Others might claim *ovations*.

XXX.

For in this field of wild heroics,
Many with patience more than *Stoics*,*
Have ſhar'd Old *Falſtaff*'s honour:
While Britain ſees her riſing glory,
And cheriſhes each faithful *tory*
That brought ſuch bliſs upon her.

XXXI.

When dreams of ſky-built wealth prevail,
Fancy will drop no wilder tale,
Nor *Æſop*'s dog be quoted;
Poor Tray beheld the chacne of gain,
But on the wild *Atlantic* main
Not even a ſhadow floated.

XXXII.

* Here our author ſeeems miſtaken: G---r-l G-ge, it is true, mentioned the patience of martyrs, perhaps underſtood to be Stoiciſm.

XXXII.

There are, (but under various hues,
Envy true merit ſtill purſues ;)
There are, Lord N-rth who mention,
And ſwear, that every action proves
To ſpread " that liberty he loves"*
Was ever his intention.

XXXIII.

But yet how oft in Fortune's ſcale,
Events quite oppoſite prevail
Than are by foreſight ſhown :
Thus Ch-ſt-rf-ld's ſubſtantial pate
Cruſh'd a whole ſtair-caſe with its weight
And fractur'd every ſtone.†

XXXIV.

Hence, ſome exclaim behold each meaſure,
The laviſh'd blood, the ſquander'd treaſure,
The riſe and progreſs ſee !

* His ſoul enjoy'd that liberty he lov'd. POPE.

† This alſo ſeems erroneous, the fact of the fracture happening where it was not to be expected according to the common courſe of things is certain, but on the beſt information there appears to have been only one ſtone fairly broken, although it is allowed two others were cracked.

How miniſters and Boſton rabble
Had firſt a waſher-woman squabble
And quarrell'd o'er their tea.

XXXV.

Now, whether 'twas, the ſaints* had wiſhes
To lure, like *Anthony*†, the fiſhes
By giving whales bohea;
Or whether pure bad taſte prevail'd,
Or in a dearth freſh water fail'd,
And drove them to the ſea.

XXXVI.

In ſhort, the whole ſurrounding ocean
Became at once this modiſh potion,
(As long has filled the papers;)
But it turn'd out, the world obſerves
Somewhat too ſtrong for Britiſh nerves,
And gave to ſome the vapours.

XXXVII.

* Boſton ſaints.

† St. Anthony, who, according to the Legend, attracted all the fiſhes in the neighbourhood with their heads raiſed above water to hear his ſermon; which no doubt converted moſt of them.

XXXVII.

Then G-ge, verboſe, to ſave the nation,
Iſſu'd full many a *proclamation*,
So wiſe none could deride them ;
Which *Yankee* folks, to ſhew their breeding,
Sweet *Cloacina*'s fane would read in ;
Then bade good luck betide them.*

XXXVIII.

Divide and rule, Lord H-llſ-br-gh cries !
When ſtrait behold a *Congreſs* riſe,
Each jarring ſtate uniting :
Thus by degrees the climax roſe,
Till, from ſharp tweaks at Britain's noſe,
It came to downright fighting.

XXXIX.

Next paſs tremendous acts by dozens,
Proſcribing brothers, ſons, and couſins,
Yet only ſerve to ſpur theſe ;

Beſides

* Suppoſed proverbial *good luck*.

Beſides a civil expedition,
Where J-hnſ-n with the grand commiſſion
Get laugh'd at by the *Worthies*.*

XL.

Did gold at length the Congreſs fail!†
Of ſums ſent out hear H-rl-y's tale!
Or did our fathers wrong 'em.
When felons only hence were driven!
While you, and I, my Lord, have given
Much better ſtuff among 'em!

XLI.

Did manufactures languiſh there,
When Britain's mart was all their care,
And commerce was our own?
We ſhut their ports, and wiſely taught,
When merchandiſe no more was bought,
To ſeek reſource at home.

Say,

* The many worthy characters, &c. See Governor J—'s Letter.

† The want of bullion for circulation appeared the great deſideratum of America, which have been ſince kindly ſupplied.

XLII.

Say, does their army want recruits?
Behold, how apt th' occaſion ſuits!
Some *neſt of villains* burns;
The brood diſtreſs'd, yet vengeful fly,
A tent preferring to the ſky,
And each a ſoldier turns.

XLIII.

Shall ſober fiſhermen, in quiet,
Catch cod amidſt the general riot?
If this reach Britiſh ears!
Reſtraining bills are wiſely made,
To ruin this rebellious trade,
And man their privateers.

XLIV.

Say, ſhall the Muſe prolong the ſtrain
Through the bright feats of each campaign,
Bold marches, wiſe retreats;
Unvaried vict'ries, which purſuing,
Atchieve as much for Britain's ruin
As all had been defeats!

XLV.

XLV.

John Bull, who pays, muſt know for what;
A rich Gazette improves the plot;
Towns won rejoice the nation:
And had the doubly charming pow'r
To lull it in ſome future hour
With wiſe evacuation.

XLVI.

Paſs o'er the project I bore part in,
Which was impoſſible at ſtarting;
Ah, woeful recollection!
The plan, indeed, was well conceiv'd,
But that it ne'er cou'd be atchiev'd
Was rather an objection.

XLVII.

Wherefore then name *Ticonderogue?*
Where your damn'd lakes all diſembogue;
Or Bennington why mention?

Since

Since each fam'd flouriſh of my pen,
The noble train, * the gallant men,
All center in *convention*.

XLVIII.

Yon rapid bird that mounts the ſkies,
Severs the medium as it flies;
Yet gone, no path we find!
The tow'ring ſhip that courts the gales,
Divides the ocean as ſhe ſails,
Yet leaves no track behind.

XLIX.

Thus on each march, the land our own,
Allegiance pours to *Britain*'s throne;
Behold the *Jerſies* won!
Then to *New-York* the troops retire,
The conqueſts all the world admire,
Which end as they begun.

L.

* Gen-r-l B-rg--ne's army had one of the moſt complete trains of artillery ever fitted out.

L.

Full many a poſt of victʼry gainʼd,
By which no object was attainʼd,
Save juſt to lull the nation;
And, after ſevʼn ſucceſsful years,
The ſtrongeſt feature that appears
Is your *capitulation.*

LI.

Blame not the knight of *Cheſapeak,*
Who ſtarted diſtancʼd juſt a week;
Such was the will of Fate!
In whoſe black page long ſince ʼtwas written,
That evʼry enterprize of Britain
Shouʼd be as much too late.

LII.

Alas, my Lord! what troops were thine!
How would ſuch glorious actions ſhine
In Freedomʼs nobler cauſe!
And ſtill the brave in evʼry age
Shall view the ſad hiſtoric page
With ſorrowful applauſe.

LIII.

LIII.

There *Tarleton*'s ſoul, by glory fir'd,
In ev'ry active toil admir'd,
Shall ſpread its glory far;
With young *Macleod*, by all approv'd,
In ſocial joys of peace belov'd,
And ſignaliz'd in war.

LIV.

Shall I, (the martial creſt reſign'd)
Urge no fond vows for human-kind,
No gen'rous wiſhes pour!
To ſtill *Bellona*'s direful ſounds,
To heal my country's bleeding wounds,
And wealth and peace reſtore!

LV.

Forbid it, Heav'n! the mind ſubdu'd
By frowning Fortune's ireful mood,
Becomes more chaſtly wiſe;
Scar'd by the blaſt of rude miſchance,
Far hence deluſive phantoms dance,
And ill won glory flies.

LVI.

Let me then breathe an ardent pray'r,
Which ev'n great *George** will gladly ſhare,
To hide the fated blade;
His ſoul humane midſt clanging arms,
Still views the olive branch's charms;
Still courts the heav'n-born Maid.

LVII.

What though in martial ſpoils he reign,
Victorious on *Virginia*'s plain,
His country bleeds around;
His patriot ſoul would joy to ſheathe
The ſword entwin'd with many a wreath,
With many a laurel crown'd!

LVIII.

Say, godlike man, by virtue warm'd,
For nature's nobleſt purpoſe arm'd,
What would thy boſom feel?

To

* However palpably this applies to a more diſtinguiſhed perſonage, it has been invidiouſly taken for one George Waſhington, a rebel commander.

To welcome home *Aſtrea*'s reign,
And conſecrate at Freedom's fane,
The Heav'n avenging ſteel!

LIX.

Till then, illuſtrious chief, proceed!
Bright honour ~~paints~~ the glorious meed,
And ſhades of heroes call;
For while thou ſtand'ſt in Virtue's cauſe,
The bulwark of thy country's laws,
Fair Freedom ſhall not fall.

LX.

Humane, beneficent, and juſt,
Long may'ſt thou guard thy ſacred truſt,
To rear an infant ſtate;
Lov'd by the good, the wiſe, the brave,
May'ſt thou be ſhunn'd by ev'ry knave,
And much abus'd by B-te.*

LXI.

* Quid voveat dulci nutricula majus alumno?

LXI.

Recording bards in ev'ry clime
Shall fill the brighteſt page of time
With thy immortal name;
While ev'ry action great and good
Shall fire the future hero's blood,
And ſwell the trump of Fame.

LXII.

Thou, Fr-nkl-n, too, enlighten'd Sage!
The glory of a learned age!
Rich philoſophic mind!
In Freedom's cauſe divinely great,
The father of thy native ſtate,
The friend of all mankind!

LXIII.

Bring forth thy matchleſs talents, bring
The choiceſt plume of nature's wing,
Inſcribe the magic page;
Whoſe potent characters may reign
O'er Reaſon's wide uſurp'd domain,
And quell wild Folly's rage.

LXIV.

LXIV.

Thus may ſweet Peace and fair Renown
Thy gen'rous toils, thy wiſdom crown,
And ſwell thy virtuous praiſe;
Whoſe ſetting Sun's refulgent light
Beams forth more eminently bright
Than *Cæſar*'s noontide rays.

LXV.

For us, my Lord, by error taught!
Shall we reſign th' experience bought,
And head *Cruſades* again;
Repreſs the riſing patriot flame,
Deſpiſe a ſoldier's honeſt fame
To forge Oppreſſion's chain

LXVI.

Sooner ſhall W-ll-ce rough no more
Sport a *Pas grave* with *Theodore*,
And charm each wond'ring Box;

[illegible] ſhall Jews with tranſport view
A-proſelyte of kindred hue,
A rabbi in Charles F-x.*

LXVII.

Sooner ſhall S-rr-y quit his bowl,
His manly ſenſe, his free-born ſoul,
To cultivate the Graces;
Sooner ſhall Sheridan grow dull,
Genius inſpire Sir S-mp--n's ſkull,
Or ſtateſmen quit their places.

LXVIII.

Rather let us repentance ſeek,
If kindred blood beſtain the cheek,
Or conſcience loudly rap;

My

* Stolen from the Heroic Epiſtle to Sir W-ll--m Ch-mb-rs.

My limbs *St. Francis'* garb entwine,
But let ſuperior guilt like thine,
Do penance at *La Trappe*.

LXIX.

There, midſt the deep reſounding cells,
Mercy with pure contrition dwells;
Theſe cloiſters none are damn'd in:
For minor faults wear ſackloth weeds,
But count whole *roſaries* of beads,
For patriots hang'd at *Cambden*.

LXX.

Thence calmly view th' Atlantic ſhore,
And bid the world this truth explore;
(A truth both you and I know)
If Britain cruſh her riſing ſtate,
'Twill be a miracle as great
As any of *St. Bruno*.*

LXXI.

* La Trappe, the moſt rigid monaſtery in Europe:

† The founder of the Carthuſians, and patron of La Trappe.

LXXI.

Here, then, adieu! What more remains,
But now to close the Muse's strains,
With vows for Britain's throne;
And, whilst on *independence* raving,
Our children's liberties enslaving,
May Heav'n protect our own!